

Spirituality and Sustainability

EXPERIENCES OF
THE INTERNATIONAL
ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

Edited by

Abdul Rashid Moten

With a foreword by Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dato' Dzulkifli Abdul Razak,
Rector, the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM)



IIUM



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CHAPTER 7

Energy Efficiency Project: Green Initiative for the Gombak Campus

Rustam Khairi Zahari &
Hazlina Mazlan

Energy efficiency simply means eliminating energy wastes or using less energy to attain the same result. Energy efficiency leads to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, reduction in the demand for energy imports, and lowering costs on a household and economy-wide level. This chapter discusses the experience of the implementation of the energy efficient initiative undertaken by the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) for its Gombak campus. The initiative aims to resolve the need of replacing inefficient infrastructure systems on-campus with newly installed efficient facilities so that the university can make savings from lower utility bills. Importantly, this approach has no financial implications, as the project involves zero capital outlay. At the same time, the IIUM is able to reduce its carbon footprint, which further strengthens the realisation of its Strategic Direction of Humanising Education through *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Energy Efficiency in the Context of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*

The energy efficiency project of IIUM was part of the university's commitment to *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* or the objectives of the divinely prescribed Islamic normative way. Saifuddeen et al. (2014) argue that *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* provide the most suitable guidance for Muslims, while Dzulkifli (2015) contends that *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* not only solves problems but also ensures that justice is served, alleviating hardships and eliminating prejudice that often results from the failure of governance and public policies. The framework of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* which focuses on the protection of faith (*al-dīn*), life (*al-nafs*), intellect (*al-'aql*), progeny (*al-nasl*) and property (*al-māl*) will be used to discuss the relationship between sustainable development and implementation of energy efficiency project at IIUM Gombak campus from a non-conventional Islamic viewpoint. These objectives are essential for the establishment of the general human welfare in this world and in the hereafter. If they are ignored, it might cause the inability to establish the world's coherence and order, as a result of which chaos and disorder will prevail.

Al-Jayyousi (2012) defines “sustainability” as *ḥayātan ṭayyibah*, which means “a good life”, and the four key Islamic concepts associated with sustainable development are *ḥikmah* (wisdom), *‘adl* (justice), *maṣlaḥah* (public interest) and *ijtihād* (innovation). As human beings are seen as *khalīfah* or God’s vicegerents or stewards on earth, they are to utilise necessary materials available in the world to help them in their stewardship. However, this utilisation must be done carefully to not offset the balance and equilibrium that Allāh (SWT) has placed upon His creation of nature, and without destroying or causing harm to it. This is one of the key points in the Islamic sustainability approach.

Al-Jayyousi (2012) explains that these concepts can be paired to create similar ones related to sustainable development. When wisdom combines with innovation, it will result in *iḥsān* (excellence). When justice combines public interest, it will result in *mīzān* (a balanced approach). When public interest combines with innovation, it will result in *arḥām* (mercy). These concepts are important to achieve the aims of sustainable development.

It is obligatory for Muslims to safeguard the environment. The excessive use of electricity causes destruction in the environment, as producing electricity for supply to the national electricity grid system involves the burning of coals. The environment is given to human beings by God as a trust to respect and preserve. Therefore, maintaining a balanced environment is part of Muslims’ duty to the protection of faith, the first objective of *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah*.

Additionally, the greenhouse gas emission from excessive usage of air-conditioning system depletes the ozone layers, causes global warming and triggers various kinds of natural disaster, such as more frequent and extreme heat, rising seas and increased coastal flooding, longer and more damaging wildfire season, hurricanes, severe drought in some areas, widespread forest death as well as melting ice caps. All these are consequences of climate change. As major losses of lives occur in the event of any natural disaster, this brings us to the second objective of *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah*, protection of life. Muslims are required to protect mankind and other living creatures on earth. Therefore, IIUM Gombak campus’s concerted efforts to ensure efficient electricity use aim to preserve the environment and avoid drastic, harmful changes in the ecosystem.

The third objective of the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* is the protection of intellect or the capacity of humans to utilise their mental ability to the maximum to achieve sustainable development. If human beings are not capable of protecting the environment using their intellect, it may pose a risk to the survival of their future generations. Apart from that, the climate change due to global warming causes massive forest fire and extinction of wildlife. Soon, there may be no real wild animals for the future generations to see and appreciate the creations of Allāh (SWT).

Both the UN's SDGs and *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* aim at protecting the environment for future generations. Mankind is responsible to ensure that their off-springs are able to breathe the fresh air and drink clean water as they do. This leads to the fourth objective of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, protection of lineage. According to the Brundtland Report, sustainable development is defined as "the use of resources that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" which is similar to the fourth objective of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, i.e. to conserve the natural resources to allow the future generations to survive in the existing, if not better, living environment.

The fifth objective of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* is the protection of property. This is directly related to the IIUM's energy efficient initiative, as it is essentially carried out to safeguard the existing buildings and fitted equipment, which have been running for more than 20 years. Using the retrofitting technique, the existing equipment, such as chillers and transformers were installed with devices to improve their performances and prolong their lifespan, which will protect the IIUM's property and save maintenance operation expenses. Apart from retaining the physical assets, efficient energy usage will eventually reduce coal burning and cause less pollution to the environment. This measure could help minimise risks factors that contribute towards further global warming. The existing level of global warming has already triggered great destruction and loss of lives, as well as properties including houses, vehicles and public facilities. Natural resources are created by God. As these cannot be replaced at a faster rate than their depletion, they must be consumed wisely and sustainably.

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Spirituality and Sustainability

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THE INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

The International Islamic University Malaysia has, since 2018, redoubled its struggle to restore its wisdom, strengths, and dignity and promote comprehensive excellence. Hence, the University adopted the United Nations' sustainable development agenda as a complement to the University's vision and mission of Islamisation, Integration, Internationalisation and Comprehensive Excellence.

The book explains the ways in which the SDGs will provide a new strategy to apply the concept of Islamisation, which has long been the foundation of the IIUM. Consequently, the university's operations and facilities have been adjusted so that they become mediums in applying and showcasing a lifestyle that is sustainable. Everything in the university i.e. the curricular and extra-curricular courses, the research activities, and everyday operations in administrative offices and other places are geared towards sustainable development in line with the maqāṣid al-sharī'ah. Elements of sustainability are integrated in every aspect of the university's administration and, indeed, in teaching, research and community engagement. Consequently, the IIUM has adopted "Humanising Higher Education through maqāṣid al-sharī'ah and SDGs" as its official strategic mission.

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